

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Masahide Shima et al.                      Art Unit : 1754  
Serial No. : 09/654,674                                      Examiner : C. Nguyen  
Filed : September 5, 2000  
Title : CERAMIC ARTICLE, CARRIER FOR CATALYST, METHODS FOR  
PRODUCTION THEREOF, CATALYST FOR PRODUCING ETHYLENE  
OXIDE USING THE CARRIER, AND METHOD FOR PRODUCING  
ETHYLENE OXIDE

**MAIL STOP AF**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF FINALITY OF ACTION OF NOVEMBER 3, 2003

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview with Applicants' counsel held on April 2, 2004 to discuss the Advisory Action of March 2, 2004 and the final Office Action of November 3, 2003.

During the interview, Applicants' counsel pointed out that, contrary to the assertion raised in the Advisory Action, the amendments proposed in the response to the final Office Action do not raise new issues for the reasons set forth in the letter faxed to the Examiner before the interview (copy attached). Applicants' counsel further discussed with the Examiner two prior art references cited in the final Office Action, i.e., JP-A-55-145677 and U.S. Patent No. 4,316,965.

At the end of the interview, the Examiner suggested that Applicants file a request for withdrawing the finality of the final Office Action and indicated that she would issue another non-final Office Action upon receipt of the request.

Accordingly, Applicants hereby respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the finality of the final Office Action and issue a new non-final Office Action.

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Attorney's Docket No.: 08917-055001 / F 2000-64-US



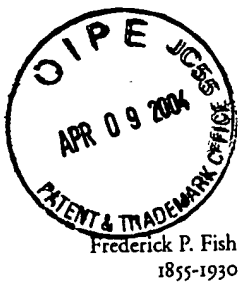
Enclosed is a \$420 check for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 4-5-04

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APRIL 1, 2004

## VIA FACSIMILE

Examiner Cam Nguyen  
U.S Patent and Trademark Office  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Re: CERAMIC ARTICLE, CARRIER FOR CATALYST...  
Application No.: 09/654,674  
Our Ref.: 08917-055001

Dear Examiner Nguyen:

Thank you for granting a telephone interview, scheduled for April 2, 2004 at 11 AM.  
We outline below what we would like to discuss during the telephone interview.

You state in the advisory action dated March 2, 2004 that the proposed claim amendments raise new issues, referring to the term "acid strength" recited in amended claims 1 and 3. We respectfully disagree.

The specification mentions the term "acid strength" and teaches how to determine acid strength (e.g., page 9, line 11-13; page 11, line 11; page 20, line 1 ... etc.). It also points out that "[t]he ceramic article of this invention ... assumes a color in methyl red as an indicator of pKa +4.8" (see page 9, lines 16-20). Thus, it is clear that the acid strength of the ceramic articles covered by claims 1 and 3 is great enough to turn the color of methyl red to its acid color, when the ceramic article is exposed to methyl red. This feature is further supported by examples 1-4, in which, "[b]y acid strength measurement, [the ceramic article] showed acid color in an indicator of pKa +4.8 ..." (see page 18, lines 11-13; page 19, lines 9-12; page 20, lines 1-4; and page 20, lines 29-32). Thus, the recitation of "acid strength" in claims 1 and 3 is well supported by the specification. Indeed, the proposed amendments simply promote clarity and do not raise any new issues.

We look forward to discussing the above issues at the interview on April 2, 2004. To expedite the prosecution, we would like to invite the Supervisor Examiner to this interview. If you agree, please provide a copy of this letter to him before the interview.

Very truly yours,

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